Rock-N-Moon Tribune

December 2006

International Celebrations of Christmas

By: Jae Hyung Kim

Christmas is a holiday based on the Christian celebration of the birth of Christ. We are all able to see each year how Christmas is celebrated in the United States, but how do our international students normally celebrated Christmas.

Since South Korea has very little Christians amongst its population, it is difficult to explain why Koreans celebrate Christmas. Most Korean children decorate Christmas trees with their families and wait for Santa Claus and teenagers usually enjoy Christmas with their friends as a just another holiday although. Korean Christians, however, do go to church to celebrating Jesus' coming.

Mexico is basically a Catholic country so the people celebrate almost the same way as Americans. They set the Nativity scene on a table, but they normally decorate the inside of their homes rather than the outside. They have a big Christmas dinner, which is sometimes turkey, on December 24th and they exchange presents with family and friends. At midnight on Christmas Eve, they go to church and spend time with family on Christmas Day.

Guinea, a nation located in western Africa, is not a Christian country and Christmas is, unfortunately, not celebrated there.

Brazil, also mainly a Catholic country, celebrates Christmas by decorating Christmas trees and the inside of their homes. They celebrate the holiday by sharing gifts with family and attending Church.

In China, the people celebrate Christmas although most are not Christian. In Chinese schools, they have a Christmas parties and decorate Christmas trees. At home, they buy new clothes and eat at restaurants with family. In Hong Kong, which was a British colony for 99 years, Christmas is celebrated in a similar fashion as the U.S.

Italy is also a Catholic country and they celebrate by going to Mass on Christmas Eve. Italians have a Christmas dinner, which is normally turkey, with their families and on Christmas morning they open their gifts. Italy also has the celebrations that take place in the Vatican City, home of the Pope and seat of the Holy See, the governing body of the Catholic Church.

Finally in New Zealand Christmas is celebrated during the summer because of the country's location. This difference causes the cultures to be completely different. One example is that the New Zealand Santa Clause wears a short shirt and pants. They usually swim and enjoy a barbecue near the beach. Their summer vacation is long and last from November to February, so families travel all over New Zealand.

As you read this article, you might find a common theme: people from every country and culture enjoys the Christmas holiday. Merry Christmas!

The Rock-N-Moon Tribune

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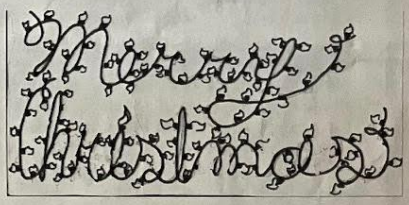


Many Alumni Return to Teach at OLA

By: Danielle Gargiulo

OLA has many new teachers this year. Many of the new staff are returning to their alma mater, and a few of them have taught here previously.

In the history and religion departments is Mrs. Shannon Collins, a graduate of 1987. During high school, her favorite teachers were Mr. Hull, Mrs. Cranford, and Mrs. Benvenutti, and she was the editor of the Crescent Courier Newspaper. Mrs. Collins always knew she wanted to come back and teach at OLA and claims that despite the new buildings and more modern equipment, the family atmosphere is still the same as it has always been. Mrs. Collins now has two daughters at OLA.

Mrs. Nancy Hoelzel, a 1980 OLA graduate, is happy to be back, surrounded by friends and family. This year, she is teaching pre-algebra, algebra, and 8th grade science. When she attended OLA, her favorite classes were, of course, math and science. After high school, she studied both biology and engineering at USM and Mississippi State.

Mrs. Hope Kergosien, the new Computer Discovery and Accounting teacher, is a graduate of 1982. She feels honored and privileged to be teaching at her old high school. Mrs. Kergosien went to USM, where she studied business education. She and her husband Pat Kergosien, SSC '82, have three daughters at OLA this year.

Mrs. Anna Kalom graduated with the class of 1991. This year, she is the Development Director at OLA, as well as Junior English teacher, her previous post at OLA. After graduating from OLA, Mrs. Kalom went to Ole Miss and studied journalism and English, and became the editor of the Daily Mississippian, the Ole Miss newspaper.

Mrs. Joan Munger, 7th and 9th grade religion teacher, isn't here for the first time either. She taught at OLA in 1988 and then left to tour Japan with her husband for a few years. She returned to teaching at OLA in 1991 and remained until her daughter graduated in1997. Now Mrs. Munger is back and says that while the post-Katrina school is very different physically, it is still very nice to be back at this "precious school with a precious mission."

The Column of Polls

The Most Returned Items for Christmas

By: Sarah Mirandy

I tallied 70 people about their most returned items. Here are the results:

26% Clothes

27% Shoes

43% Cheap gifts

4% Toys

Power Interview with
Coach McCall

By: Jae Hyung Kim

At first, his youthful looks deceived the students into believing that he was just another student, but Coach McCall has returned to his alma mater to impart his knowledge of the world to the SSC and OLA communities. Mr. McCall teaches World History and U.S. Government and is also the coach of the Ninth Grade and Junior Varsity basketball squads this year.

Coach McCall was born in Boston, Massachusetts, but moved to Bay Saint Louis when he was 10 years old. Mr. McCall, a new teacher this year, graduated from St. Stanislaus College in 2000. In his days as a student at SSC, Coach McCall played basketball. He said that St. Stanislaus really prepared him for college and the basketball program taught him to be responsible for himself.

He likes St. Stanislaus so far and especially loves the hard work, good people and great pay (a little bit of sarcasm). In his opinion, the most important thing to learn in World History and U.S Government is that people's interaction with one another is the most important aspect of our lives. As a coach, he thinks that the basketball team has the potential to be good. He said that most guys are doing a great job, but some need to work harder.

He has traveled around the world to places such as London, Manchester, Granada, Cadiz, Sevilla, Prague, New York, Chicago, and L.A. He wants to travel everywhere, but especially to Central and South America, Southeast Asia, Japan, and Korea.

He is particularly interested in Modern World History because we can relate to the events and we can see how people interact with each other. He said knowledge of the world is the most important thing in life and his goal in teaching is to inspire his students to want to see the world.

At last, he wants to tell the students that the world is bigger than Bay St. Louis or your high school and that life is more important than the every day problems at SSC and Our Lady Academy.

Literary Section

A Hallmark of the Seasons

By: Megan Gargiulo

As soon as the temperature drop really sets in, we all know the boxes will soon make their appearance, haggard and dusty but expectant, containing our decorations from countless Christmases past. Even though they've been hibernating for a year, I remember each item and its significance as though Christmas had just happened yesterday. There is snow outside, but I can feel the muted, weighty coldness of December pressing on our house. Our living room is a cocoon of comfort and warmth, the same Christmas songs we know by heart sliding in and out of the stereo speakers. The time is ripe to decorate our house for the holidays, an event repeated every mid-December in my family, preparing us for the holiday season and uniting us with memories from the past and hope for the future.

After the boxes are out, we each impatiently wait assembly-line style for our turn to unearth a Christmas decoration. Mom directs the traffic; we run with this Santa tin or that candle to position it in its prescribed location. She will rearrange everything later, but no one takes notice. As each figurine is exhumed, an "I remember that!" is exclaimed, an anecdote recounted. My job is always to set up our nativity scene and find a place for the musical Santa duck. Our nativity scene is a small set of porcelain mice, crowded excitedly about the newborn baby Jesus-mouse. I've always loved their hopeful expressions and little leather tails. The Santa duck is a tacky, polyester-furred stuffed animal that played "Jingle Bells" when you pressed its beak until, much to my dismay, the song was reduced to a few pitiful gurglings and finally silence. I still try to eke a tune out of him when I unwrap him.

Another revered Christmas trimming is the glass snowman jar, which has been filled with mint M&M's each holiday season as far back as I can remember, providing a stealthily grabbed handful on each passing. Countless stories are matched with a myriad of items we pull from boxes on decorating day, each trivial yet significant, a hallmark of the season.

Our decorations are merely an aggregation of material possessions, stored away like Templeton's treasures for most of the year. But really, it is the sense of preparation for the season our activity brings, the closeness and tenderness among my mom, dad, brother, and me, which is important. A tepid cup of hot chocolate and shared recollections of family history are the symbols of Christmastime to me, saying more than any parish minister. The small ceremonies and traditions give me a past grounded in family tradition to gaze back upon fondly now and in my future life.

A group of OLA seniors at their retreat on October 26th.

OLA Seniors Revive Class Friendships at Retreat

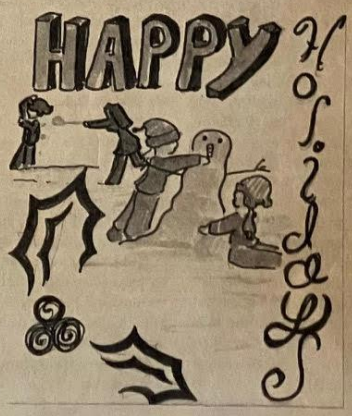
By: Amy Gemelli

On Thursday, October 26th, the Our Lady Academy Class of 2007 participated in one of the greatest experiences of senior year—senior retreat. During the overnight retreat at the Diamondhead Community Center, all of the girls had the chance to play games, celebrate Mass together, and share their feelings about graduation. They were especially grateful for the thousands of wonderful retreat letters which they enjoyed reading into the wee hours of the morning.

Each girl gained nearly five pounds as she ate her way through chicken parmesan, jambalaya, brownies, potato salad, gumbo, Subway sandwiches, and a ton of various junk foods. The girls, however, were willing to sacrifice their figures to the great time they had getting away from the pressures of school and bonding with their classmates.

"Good food, good friends, good fun!" said Anna Sharp as she described her retreat experience.

The highlights of the night included watching the senior boys who rolled the girls' cars get in trouble and the talent show. The girls watched a wonderful performance of a Mothers' Day skit, danced to Dream-Street, and did hilarious impersonations of movie characters. They were also treated to an anonymous teacher's spectacular rendition of Marilyn Monroe's *Happy Birthday Mr. President*.

While many of the girls have experienced retreat before, this was a new event for the new members of the class. Even though the retreat was something new for a few, all of the girls opened up and took advantage of the time she had to spend with her classmates.

One new student, Rebecca Hubbard, commented, "The retreat allowed me to learn more about my class and gave my class to the chance to learn more about me. It made me realize how lucky I am to get to spend my senior year with such a fun senior class. My senior retreat is something I will remember for the rest of my life."